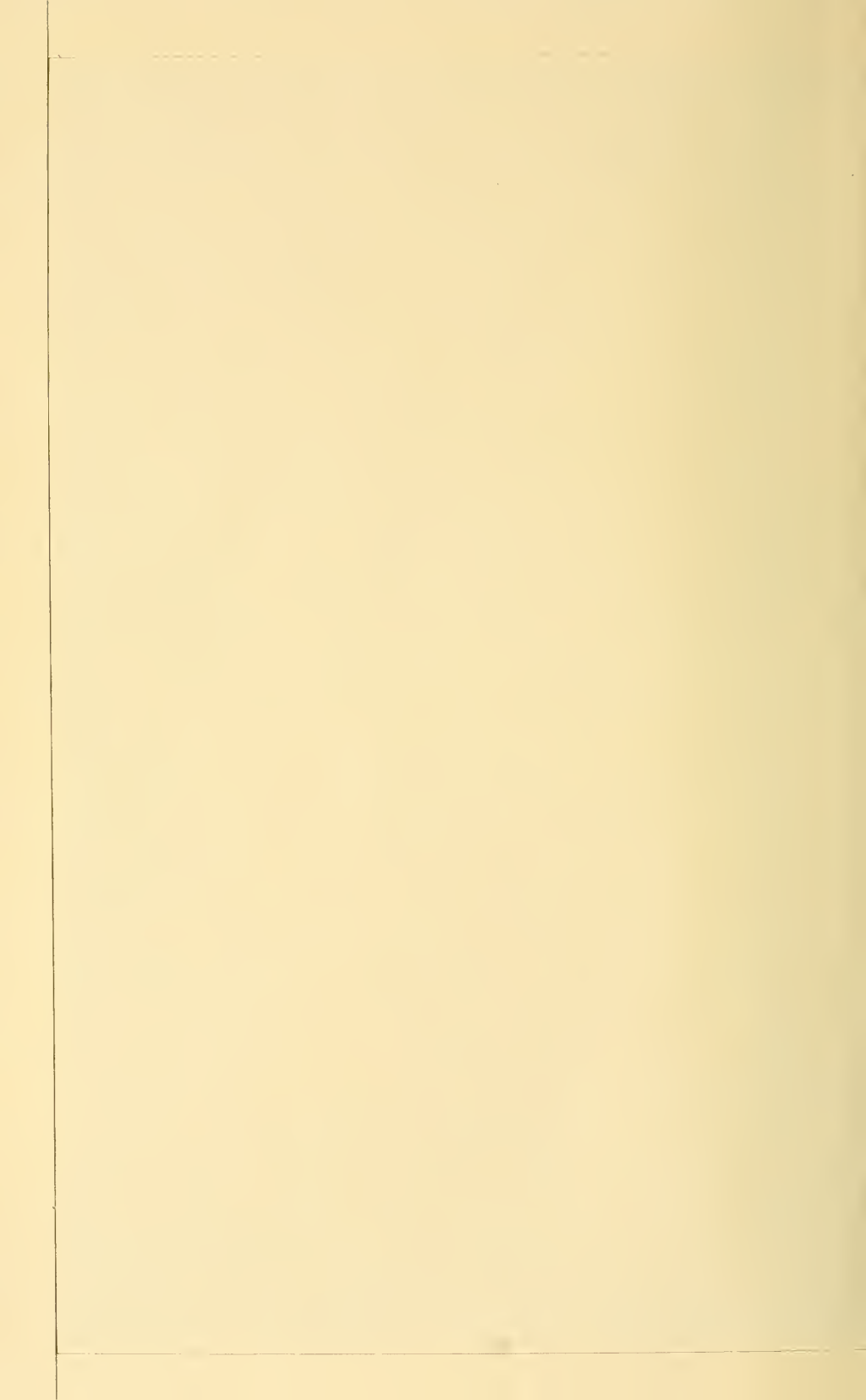


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Charles P. Curtis Esq
from his friend
A. D. Ferguson

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ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.



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THE
PRACTICABILITY
OF THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY:

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED AT THE
LYCEUM IN STOCKBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS,

FEBRUARY, 1831.

"THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM IS THE CAUSE OF MAN."

NEW-YORK :
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Mrs. C. E. Hunter
April 22, 1866

ADDRESS.

THE question which I have been requested to consider, is, perhaps, the most momentous that concerns the human race.

My condition entitles me to assign defect of sight as an apology for the imperfection, and especially the ill arrangement of the argument which I shall present.

Is it possible to abolish African Slavery in this country; or, in other words, is the perpetual subjugation of the African race the necessary result of the condition of human nature?

The question should be considered calmly and philosophically. We should not be misled by our passions or our sympathies. In attempting to obtain justice for some, we should not do injustice to others.

We in the North are reproached for our interference with this subject, even by remonstrance or advice. We are told, with more apparent than real justice, that freemen, who know not the state of slavery by personal residence, or long observation, are unable to estimate its true condition, or the capacity of slaves for emancipation. This opinion is natural,

but, I think, not just. We might retort that custom dulls sensibility—that those who are immersed in error are least likely to perceive it—and those who habitually do wrong, are the last to ascertain that it is wrong.

The principle of vanity in human nature—the disposition in making comparisons between ourselves and others; between our race and a race contrasted with it—leads to deeper errors than superficial observers are apt to suppose.

There is no more ordinary disposition in human nature than that of ascribing intellectual superiority to the race, cast, color, or nation, to which we belong. The Spartan had no doubt of his superiority to the Helot—the Jew, in his own opinion, was better than the Gentile—the Roman claimed a higher grade than the Barbarian—the Turk considered himself superior to the infidels whom he vanquished,—and the feudal baron, of noble blood, felt himself far exalted above the peasant, the villain, and the serf.

It is impossible for man, previously to observation, and to long continued observation, to estimate the degree of degradation of character which results from degradation of condition. In regard to the blacks, to whom the question applies, the observation has rarely been made fairly.

The progress of black children, when compared with that of white children, at primary schools, would afford the fairest test. Wherever it has been made, I believe that it has not shown any inferiority in the blacks. The few black children who have enjoyed this advantage of education, while they were too young to be conscious of the inferiority of their condition, and of their future destiny and rank in society, have, at this early age, maintained a fair equality

with their little competitors, the white children. They are rarely continued at school beyond the age of ten years ; even before that time their emulation is repressed, and their efforts are discouraged by the intimation of the superiority of their companions, which is communicated in every look and gesture.

As society now exists, even in the Northern States, there cannot, after the period of early childhood, be any fair competition between the two races. In the lottery of life, one set of adventurers is destined to draw all the prizes. Those who have the taint of the sable color are as unable to attain any elevated station in society as if precluded by law. The learned professions are closed to them. They are not merely debarred from rank, but most of the occupations in life, by which wealth is attained, are beyond their reach. With the exception of Hayti, the blacks have not enjoyed liberty in any part of America, except at the North ; and there the climate is less favorable to them than to the whites.

None but those who have felt it can, even by approximation, estimate either the sense of degradation, or the actual inferiority of character which is caused by the bare fact of belonging to a degraded cast. Man is brutified by slavery, and *therefore* declared incapable of freedom. Those who regard him in this humiliated station, refer his indolence, his ignorance, and his shiftlessness to the defect of original capacity. He is deprived of the stimulants and excitements which prompt other men to exertion, and is considered inert by nature. He shrinks from the whip, justly conscious that superior force would be called in to overpower resistance—

and he is called a coward. He procures clothes by stealth, because he is naked, and food because he is hungry—and he is branded as a thief. His passions are excited by insult and abuse—and he is termed ferocious.

All men are to be presumed to be equal, and to be equally entitled to the protection of the law in any particular country, until the contrary shall be proved.

The right to discriminate between the blacks and whites, if it exist, must be the same which gives to men authority over inferior animals. It must be proved, not presumed; and the question can never be fairly decided, until by a long course of rivalry and competition, upon terms of perfect equality, it shall at last appear that one race is decidedly inferior to the other.

Those who are but superficially acquainted with human nature, will be at no loss to account for the opinion of slave holders, that their slaves are by nature inferior to themselves, and must, therefore, from the necessity of their nature, remain in a station permanently degraded. External appearances are often the grounds of judgment. Few resist the effect of a mean garb in forming an opinion of the wearer. The colored skin of the African is regarded by his owner as a habit of degradation imposed upon him by nature.

The supposed inferiority of the Africans is not, however, probably, so much inferred from their color as from their condition, which creates the character that is supposed to be original and inherent. If it were not for the established associations with the sable color, no more inference would be derived from it than from any of the varieties of the European complexion. It is as unphilosophical to decide

upon the character of a man from the color of his skin, as it would be to decide upon the properties of a tree from the color of its bark, without further examination.

When there is so much in the situation and condition of this unfortunate race to account for its depression, why aggravate the injustice by asserting an original inferiority which they have had but few and slight opportunities to disprove; and which, when those opportunities have been offered, has been disproved?

Many who hear me will remember to have heard of the traits of heroism displayed by the negroes who were executed some years since for conspiracy at Charleston, South Carolina. If it were only for the devoted affection and the courageous fidelity which the slaves have so frequently manifested in defence of their masters, it would be sufficiently apparent that they are as susceptible of kindly and benevolent affections, as ready to encounter dangers, and make sacrifices, as those of our race.

The truth is, that human nature is the same in all mankind. We are, for the most part, creatures of circumstances—and character is formed by condition. The misfortune or the mistake, is, that it is also judged of by condition. Degradation is perceived. The capacities which, with proper aid, and in different conditions, would elevate the depressed cast, are not perceived. This partial observation is one of the ordinary causes of mistake. The sphere of observation is limited—experience is very much limited—and the hasty conclusion, that the inhabitants of one portion of the globe are essentially different from the rest, is founded upon a degree of evidence and observation

that would scarcely be sufficient to ascertain the character of an individual.

Those who believe that the African race is incapable of being raised by liberty to a state of equality with other races, have never seen it in that condition. All their observations have been made upon an enslaved people, and under circumstances to cause an apparent contrast between the masters and slaves, greater than can readily be conceived where society is on a level. In slave countries, (as Burke has well remarked,) liberty is an elevated condition: it implies not merely exemption from bondage, but superiority and dominion. The slave is sunk below the level, and the master raised above it. With this influence operating upon their minds, the owners of slaves should not assume that they only can judge of the possibility or expediency of the emancipation of slaves.

In communities where slavery has been abolished, or where there are but few remaining slaves, the opportunity to form a just estimate of the capabilities of the African character, is somewhat better. The blacks, however, have nowhere in this country had any thing like a fair chance to manifest their equality with the whites. The dominant race enjoys, not merely all the honors and distinctions of society, receives all the emoluments derived from the more elevated occupations, stations, and professions; but the mere fact of being included in its numbers, is of itself a distinction which the degraded cast cannot even hope to attain. The sentiment, operating thus powerfully upon the whites, is, I believe, not founded in nature, but factitious, the result of associations which have been long indulged. It has been

diminished by time and intercourse ; but yet operates with great power. This sentiment, the pride, self-complacency, and conscious superiority of the superior cast ; the constant assertion, or at least manifestation of that superiority in the limited intercourse between the whites and blacks, and their total exclusion from social circles, are quite sufficient to account for the depression of the blacks, even after having attained all the equality that the laws of the land can confer.

To familiarize the mind with the cause of the inferiority of the African race—its inferiority of condition—it would be well to notice the operation of this cause in the various modifications, forms and appearances, of the subordination of one race to another. All history, every part of the earth, abound with illustrations. Civilization, literature, science, and the arts, are supposed to have arisen in the East ; yet what European, who treads the banks of the Euphrates, the Ganges, or the Nile, and beholds the degradation of the descendants of those who illumined the world, is able wholly to resist the illusion that he is of a better mould than those whom he sees in squalid poverty—the slaves of his own countrymen, or, perhaps, of less lenient masters ?

It would require much minute observation and information to give a mere sketch,—the slightest delineation of this characteristic of our race ; the inferiority of the subjected to the dominant race, caused by the fact of subjection, and ordinarily imputed to difference of original character. It is exhibited in very varied forms, and in very different degrees. We can best observe it in the different conditions of the Africans in our own country. Here, as elsewhere, subjection is modified by circumstances. The familiarity which

naturally and necessarily grows up between those who live under the same roof, in a great degree prevents cruelty towards house-servants.

The condition of the domestic slaves is alleviated in every mode, and the mind is proportionally freed from the prostrating sense of abject subjection, which is felt by the field negroes, who are worked in the fields like cattle. Among the inmates of a family there is necessarily some degree of acquaintance, and some reciprocation of feeling. This familiarity is inconsistent with that absolute prostration of mind felt by the gang, who receive brief orders from the overseer, and these sometimes accompanied with the lash. A gentleman is seldom disposed to flog his valet de chambre, and a lady cannot lash her nurse; yet the same negroes, under the overseer, would be urged to their task by the whip. This difference of treatment causes a correspondent difference of spirit. If, therefore, different degrees of bodily subjection produce corresponding effects upon the mind, if the slave relieved from the thong and the lash, is thereby partially emancipated from his mental thralldom, it is surely not unreasonable to suppose, that complete emancipation of the body would cause correspondent emancipation and elevation of the mind; if, with slavery, were also removed the other obstacles which now prevent the Africans from manifesting a character in all respects like our own. Equality of legal rights; all the emancipation that the law can give, does not include the emancipation of the mind from the sense of inferiority which results from difference of cast.

It is just as reasonable to suppose that the Bramin and the Paria of Hindostan were made in different moulds, or

of different materials, because of the difference of their rank and mental attainments, as that the free or enslaved African is constitutionally inferior to the European. In the case of the Paria, the sense of inferiority may be manifested by ceremonial observances, and in other very different modes from those wherein an African is compelled to acknowledge his subjection; but the feeling is of the same character. This consciousness of inferiority, resulting from a degraded condition, is nearly universal wherever the degradation exists. Those who rise superior to it are exceptions from the ordinary human character. This pervading influence extends to the poor, and affects their whole character. The poor are usually subservient. The same influence, which, in a less degree, operates upon the destitute, and those in humble condition, operates in much greater degree upon the oppressed African. The superiority of the European races—of the English race, to which we belong—has been of slow growth. We have arrived, by imperceptible degrees, to a point of elevation from which we look down and around, with a sense of superiority, as if the height had been attained by our unaided efforts, and without remembering or regarding the means whereby we ascended. We despise the abject African, because he does not at once leap up to the ascent upon which we have been placed by circumstances, which we could no more control than he could have controlled his destiny.

We should look at the subject in a different aspect. We should make all allowances for the different condition of the Africans and ourselves; give them credit for what they

have done, and not reproach them for not doing what they had no means of doing. They have the same principle of buoyancy with ourselves; and the instant that the weight, which depresses their level in society, is taken off, they will rise and occupy the space that is left vacant for them.

Such has been my acquaintance with individuals of this race, that I regard the pretence of original and natural superiority in the whites, very much as I regard the tales of ancient fables, setting forth the superior bodily strength of heroes. But for the care of one of this calumniated race, I should not now, probably, be living to give this testimony.

A very slight sketch of the history of the person to whom I refer may serve to illustrate this argument: Elizabeth Freeman (known afterwards by the name of Mum Bett,) was born a slave, and lived in that condition thirty or forty years. She first lived in Claverac, Columbia county, in the state of New-York, in the family of a Mr. Hogeboom. She was purchased at an early age by Col. Ashley, of Sheffield in the county of Berkshire, in the now commonwealth of Massachusetts. In both these states, and I believe every where in the Northern States, slavery existed in a very mitigated form. This is not so much to be ascribed to the superior humanity of the people, as to the circumstances of the case. The slaves were comparatively few. Society, except perhaps in the capitals, was in a state nearly primitive. The slaves were precluded from the table in but few families. Their masters and mistresses wrought with the slaves. A great degree of familiarity necessarily resulted from this mode of life. Slavery in New-York and New-England was so masked, that but a slight difference could

be perceived in the condition of slaves and hired servants. The character of the slaves was moulded accordingly. Sales were very rare. The same feeling which induces a father to retain a child in his family, or at least under his control, disinclined him from parting with his slave. There was little distinction of rank in the country. The younger slaves not only ate and drank, but played with the children. They thus became familiar companions with each other. The black women were cooks and nurses, and as such assisted by their mistresses. There was no great difference between the fare or clothing of blacks and white laborers.

In this state of familiar intercourse, instances of cruelty were uncommon, and the minds of the slaves were not so much subdued but that they caused a degree of indignation not much less than if committed upon a freeman.

Under this condition of society, while Mum Bett resided in the family of Col. Ashley, she received a severe wound in a generous attempt to shield her sister. Her mistress in a fit of passion resorted to a degree and mode of violence very uncommon in this country: she struck at the weak and timid girl with a heated kitchen shovel: Mum Bett interposed her arm, and received the blow; and she bore the honorable scar it left to the day of her death. The spirit of Mum Bett had not been broken down by ill usage—she resented the insult and outrage as a white person would have done. She left the house, and neither commands nor entreaties could induce her to return. Her master, Col. Ashley, resorted to the law to regain possession of his slave. This was shortly after the adoption of the constitution of

Massachusetts. The case was tried at Great Barrington. Mum Bett was declared free: it being, I believe, the first instance (or among the first instances) of the practical application of the declaration in the Massachusetts Bill of Rights, that "all men are born free and equal."

The late Judge Sedgwick had the principal agency in her deliverance. She attached herself to his family as a servant. In that station she remained for many years, and was never entirely disconnected from his family.

She was married when young: her husband died soon after, in the continental service in the revolutionary war, leaving her with one child. During the residue of her life she remained a widow. She died in December, 1829, at a very advanced age. She supposed herself to be nearly a hundred years old.

If there could be a practical refutation of the imagined natural superiority of our race to hers, the life and character of this woman would afford that refutation. She knew her station, and perfectly observed its decorum; yet she had nothing of the submissive or subdued character, which succumbs to superior force, and is the usual result of the state of slavery. On the contrary, without ever claiming superiority, she uniformly, I believe in every case, obtained an ascendancy over all those with whom she was associated in service. Her spirit of fidelity to her employers was such as has never been surpassed. This was exemplified in her whole life. I can convey an idea of it only by the relation of a single incident.

The house of Mr. Sedgwick, in this town, (Stockbridge) was attacked by a body of insurgents, during the Shay's war,

so well remembered in this vicinity. Mr. Sedgwick was then absent at Boston, and Mum Bett was the only guardian of the house. She assured the party that Mr. Sedgwick was absent, but suffered them to search the house to find him, which they did, by feeling under the beds and in other places of concealment, with the points of their bayonets. She did not attempt to resist by direct force, the rifling of property, which was one of the objects of the insurgents. She, however, assumed a degree of authority—told the plunderers that they “dare not strike a woman,”—and attended them in their exploring the house, to prevent wanton destruction. She escorted them into the cellar with a large kitchen shovel in her hand, which she intimated that she would use as a weapon in case of necessity. One of the party broke off the neck of a bottle of porter. She told him that if he or his companions desired to drink porter, she would fetch a corkscrew, and draw the cork, and they might drink like gentlemen ; but that, if the neck of another bottle should be broken, she would lay the man, that broke it, flat with her shovel. Upon tasting the liquor, the party decided that “if gentlemen loved such cursed bitter stuff, they might keep it.”

Understanding, from the conversation of the party, that they intended to take with them in their retreat, a very fine gray mare that was in the stable, which she had been in the habit of riding, she left the house and went directly to the stable. Before the rioters were apprised of her intention, she led the animal to a gate that opened upon the street ; stripped off the halter, and, by a blow with it, incited the

mare to a degree of speed that soon put her out of danger from the pursuit of the marauders.

Even in her humble station, she had, when occasion required it, an air of command which conferred a degree of dignity, and gave her an ascendancy over those of her rank, which is very unusual in persons of any rank or color. Her determined and resolute character, which enabled her to limit the ravages of a Shay's mob, was manifested in her deportment and conduct during her whole life. She claimed no distinction; but it was yielded to her from her superior experience, energy, skill, and sagacity. In her sphere she had no superior, nor any equal. In the latter part of her life she was much employed as a nurse. Here she had no competitor. I believe she never lost a child, when she had the care of its mother, at its birth. When a child, wailing in the arms of its mother, heard her steps on the stairway, or approaching the door, it ceased to cry.

This woman, by her extreme industry and economy, supported a large family of grand-children and great-grand-children. She could neither read nor write; yet her conversation was instructive, and her society was much sought. She received many visits at her own house, and very frequently received and accepted invitations to pass considerable intervals of time in the families of her friends. Her death, notwithstanding her great age, was deeply lamented.

Having known this woman as familiarly as I knew either of my parents, I *cannot* believe in the moral or physical inferiority of the race to which she belonged. The degradation of the African must have been otherwise caused

than by natural inferiority. Civilization has made slow progress in every portion of the earth: where it has made progress, it proceeds in an accelerated ratio.

The wonder rather is, why Asia and Europe became civilized, than why Africa remains uncivilized. We know little of the interior of the vast continent of Africa. If it be uniformly, or for the greater part flat and accessible, so that there are few natural defences or fastnesses, but the inhabitants are every where, or nearly every where, exposed to their enemies, so that a victory is equivalent to a conquest—this, alone, considering the warlike propensities of men, goes far to explain why Africa has not advanced in the arts and sciences, and why she has not been able to make provision for the enjoyment of the comforts of life. Perpetual war, or the perpetual hazard of war, when the consequence of defeat is slavery, are inconsistent with the cultivation of the intellect, or the accumulation of wealth.

Since the advice of Las Casas was adopted, soon after the discovery of South America, to substitute the vigorous African laborer for the feeble Indian; since the slave trade has been carried on, and the inhabitants of every portion of Africa, where European or American intercourse has extended, have been employed in making captives, or in avoiding captivity, there is little occasion for assigning any other cause why civilization and the arts have not flourished in Africa. If the inquiry be, why the *slaves* are degraded, the question implies its answer—because they are slaves. There is no greater inferiority of the blacks to the white race, no more comparative degradation than can well be

accounted for by the fact of slavery. Just as the condition is meliorated the spirit rises. Let these people be emancipated ; let them, for a long course of time, be placed in the same state of relationship to other societies and communities as the whites are ; let them enjoy the same advantages of education, of commercial interchange, and the humanizing intercourse of life, and the result will be to prove, that human nature is the same in man in all his different colors, forms and varieties ; that like causes produce like effects ; and the blacks would become as civilized, humane, and polite as the whites.

We do not appreciate our own advantages. The present state of society and intercourse between civilized nations, limited as it still is by restrictive and barbarous policy, is yet wonderful ; and wonderful in its effects to civilize, refine, and exalt the human character. What man is more than a beast, results from association. The blacks have been without this great aid in the advancement of our species. They have had no means to advance, and therefore have not advanced. Let our people reflect upon what they owe to the English language, and to their intercourse with England alone, and they may gain some ideas of the causes of our comparative advance, and the comparative abasement of Africa.

If we are ignorant why human nature was first developed in Asia ; why it was and has been for ages retrograde there, so that the inhabitants of the two contiguous continents, unless the decline of Asia be arrested, must be in a common condition of barbarism—we may well be ignorant why Africa has been behind the other continents in the

march of civilization. In Africa human intercourse has probably been as much restricted as upon the islands inhabited by barbarians. In the various quarters of the globe there are many tribes of barbarians on the islands and on the continent as barbarous as the Caffres or Hottentots.

There is no proof that the human race, originating in Africa, is by natural constitution mentally inferior to the races originating in other parts of the globe. In physical strength, which affords a sure criterion of comparison, the Africans certainly are not inferior to other men. If then Africans are like other men, equally capable of self-government, and of obtaining their subsistence, there is no apparent reason why they should not be left to self-government, and be permitted to enjoy the same liberty with other men. Slavery is not a rightful condition. No man has a right to hold another in bondage, except for specified cause ascertained by law. The foundation of the claim to hold men as slaves is none the better because the claim is decorated by learned language. The "jus belli," or right of war, is merely the right of the strongest. It is the law of power, that forgets right. In ancient times the state of war gave right—if practice makes right—to confiscate and appropriate individual property. This species of barbarism has partially passed away; but, with the inconsistency which characterizes violations of right, the claim of right to appropriate the private property of an enemy on land is now relinquished, while the practice is continued of making and retaining captures on water. Time, and the progress of society, have produced many reforms which would have been deemed impossible by those who reasoned as some men reason now

concerning the abolition of slavery. Much has been attempted, and something has been done, to prevent the practice of privateering. The right of capturing and converting private property to the use of the captor as appertaining to the state of war, is upon the same principle as the right of capturing and enslaving the person. The last is the more barbarous custom—and it is to be anticipated, that the same progress of civilization which promises to abolish privateering, will also abolish the slave trade and slavery.

We are far too apt to suppose that what is, is necessary. In despotic countries, despotism appears as necessary a condition as slavery in a country where a portion of the inhabitants is free. Entire nations have been disenthralled. This surely would lead us to suppose, that what has been done for an entire community, may be done for a portion of a community.

The reason—whatever coloring may be given—why men are held as slaves is, because they are profitable. Their services are worth more than their support. Many worn-out slaves are, no doubt, maintained from charity, or a sense of duty; but the motive for the commencement of the practice, and the sole reason why it is continued, is the love of lucre. This is an unlawful motive in relation to this subject. If men's minds were not rendered callous by custom, all would admit that there can be no legitimate property in human flesh. Such property cannot be rightfully acquired, nor rightfully transferred. Conscience soon becomes familiarized to an ordinary mode of injustice. The consideration that value has been paid, seems to cause an erroneous supposition of rightful possession. A man who has

received a counterfeit bank note as genuine, especially if he has paid the full value, is not readily inclined to permit it to be cancelled, or to part with it without an equivalent. In like manner, those who become owners of slaves for value paid, or even by inheritance, without any unlawful act of their own, are apt to consider the slaves as property fairly belonging to them. They are, however, no more justly their property than stolen goods bought at the market price. In one case it is a simple violation of the right of the original owner to a chattel, the property wherein is transferable; in the other, the violation of right relates to property not transferable.

Anticipations have been founded upon the predictions of Revelation, that there will be a long season of "Peace on earth and good will to men." The fulfillment of these predictions is inconsistent with the continued existence of slavery. There can be no permanent and assured peace where there is permanent injustice. The feelings of charity and benevolence cannot be universally diffused—there cannot be perfect good will between all men, when some of them are held in unlawful bondage to others. The elements of human nature must be the same during the millenium as before. Injustice and oppression must ever cause hatred and sorrow. A state of bondage is evidently inconsistent with the universal joy and harmony that have been predicted—when swords were to be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning hooks—when wars are to be no more—when the lion is to lie down with the lamb, and the child to play unharmed with the tongue of the serpent. Injustice and oppression cannot be submitted to while there

is a hope of obtaining redress. This would be prostration of mind, not resignation. Every advance of society leads to a further advance. No philanthropist will be satisfied with the condition of his race, while a large portion of it, distinguished only by its color, is mere property, sold like the beasts in the market places.

If slaves can do more than support themselves, if they can earn so much as that a surplus remains for their masters—and if this were not so, they would not be held in slavery—they can support themselves. Free labor is much more productive than slave labor. To suppose that those who now support themselves and their masters, while slaves, could not, with the stimulus of liberty, support themselves in Hayti, Liberia, or in Florida, or upon some of the unsold lands of the United States north of Florida, seems absurd.

I am not disposed to tamper with the constitution; but, if this evil cannot be removed, but at the expense and by the act of the government, then there is sufficient object for amending the constitution. Suppose the citizens of the United States to assent to this course, and the difficulty is removed. If necessary to make a gift of a portion of our immense territory in unsold land, the same spirit that excited the people to attend to the subject, would prevent any murmurs at such a sacrifice; which, from the facility with which these lands have been disposed of and resumed, would probably be thought nominal.

The space permitted will not allow me to present a detailed project for abolishing slavery at the expense of the United States. I have made the suggestion chiefly to show that it had not escaped me. I shall now consider the sub-

ject as if it were hopeless to expect either a remuneration to the masters for the slaves, or a provision for the support of the emancipated negroes, by allotment of lands, or otherwise, from the general government.

The present masters or employers of slaves would probably continue to employ them after they were emancipated. Their loss would consist in the difference between the cost of support and wages. As they would labor more cheerfully and efficiently as freemen than as slaves, the increased amount of production would operate as a compensation to their former masters. The increase in the amount of produce from the earth, with the same laborers, is certainly a general benefit—and what benefits the entire community, will, probably, benefit each class in it. The landholders would in part be rewarded by the increased value of the lands. Slavery checks the increase of population, and it is always a dense population that creates and sustains high prices for lands.

One reform would probably bring on another. The same spirit acting upon the community, which should induce slave holders to do justice, should also induce others to do them justice. The south probably loses more by injustice in one form than it gains by injustice in another—loses more by the tariff than it gains by slavery.

The tariff in this, and in every country where taxes or duties are imposed with design to prevent free intercourse, and to restrict the right of purchase and sale, is a partial, qualified, disguised slavery. It has nevertheless been proposed, and is advocated, as the permanent policy of the government. Its perpetuity is considered essential to the

preservation of the country. When we hear such language and such arguments from grave men—educated men—men of high standing and influence in society—filling the elective offices,—attempting to support the doctrine that wealth and population are lessened by free trade—and that one set of men have a right to prescribe to another set of men what they shall purchase, and from whom the purchase shall be made;—when we hear this minor species of folly and injustice promulgated from our governors' chairs, and received by the mass of their electors as the precepts of justice and wisdom—it should surely teach us charity towards those who apply the same principles in different forms, and to different objects. The politicians who at this moment seem to be predominant in the country, really suppose that the tariff must be perpetual, and that from the nature and condition of man—certainly as existing in the United States of America—cheap clothing and tropical productions must be at unnatural prices.

I could not perhaps select better instances to show the shallowness of ordinary politicians, and to illustrate the all-pervading error whereby artificial institutions and unnatural conditions, founded in ignorance, injustice, and folly, are supposed to be forever imposed upon society by the laws of nature and the constitution of man, than the two paramount evils of this country—slavery and the tariff.

Mr. Clay, the distinguished advocate of the tariff, and his followers, terming it the “American System,” consider it so interwoven into the texture of society, so identified with its interests, that the community can never be emancipated therefrom.

The same gentleman—perhaps under the same unfortunate bias of mind—has pronounced a distinct opinion that slavery is so firmly established, and so thoroughly incorporated into our society, that it must participate in the immortality of the “American System.” With peculiar felicity this creed of the candidate for the next presidency includes the two most hurtful heresies in the country—the legitimacy of slavery and the tariff—and professes a belief in the necessary perpetuity of both. Nature does not interdict the exchange of English broadcloths and American corn; nor does it any more interdict the freedom of a black man, who has been transported to or born in the United States. Both of these artificial and unnatural institutions are totally unnecessary and foreign to the nature of man, and mere excrescences or fungusses in society. Men have been as much infatuated as to the necessary perpetuity of other grievances, as many now are in regard to the necessary perpetuity of slavery. The anticipation of any considerable improvement usually produces a panic among those who predict evil from reform. The slave-holders fear the destruction of the country from the admission of liberty; the tariff men fear the destruction of the country from the admission of foreign goods.

When slavery and the tariff shall have passed away, it will be perceived that they were strange, unnatural states of society, which did not arise in the natural course of things, did not spring up of themselves; but were artificial, superinduced, and formed no part of the healthy political constitution. Society will be lightened and relieved of burdens which now press upon it, although it does not

perceive their weight. The wonder will be, why such gross and apparent evils were so long endured; and why there was so much unnecessary apprehension of the consequences of removing the causes of political disease.

The nature of man is not such that society cannot exist without injustice. If the blacks are men with like senses and capacities with other men; if they are ranked in the class of human beings, like other human beings, they are entitled to freedom.

The argument technically termed "ab inconvenienti,"—that the rendering of justice would tend to inconvenience—would not avail in a court of justice, and it should not avail when pleaded before the country. Necessity is in all cases an admissible plea, but it must be strictly proved. If the preservation of society, or the support of those who are now slaves, absolutely require the continuance of slavery, then it should be continued, otherwise it should be abolished.

Let us inquire what would be the probable result of the emancipation of all the slaves in this country, at a future period, say on the first day of May, 1850.

At that time the population of the United States will probably amount to twenty millions. Political economists have shown that as population increases, in countries where commerce and industry are free, the increase in the means of living is greater than the increase in the numbers of the people; so that each individual obtains a subsistence more easily than before. A garden is more productive and more profitable than a farm. Labor is more effective, and markets more regular where the population is dense.

If, in the interval, the country should not be visited by calamity, the national debt will long have ceased to exist. It is to be hoped that the national policy will be modeled accordingly. There will no longer be any apology for the present absurd legislation, whereby the necessaries and comforts of life are raised to artificial prices. With a population of twenty millions, a capitation tax of fifty cents per head would defray the necessary expenses of the government; and if the tax were on property, it would scarcely be felt.

The present system of disguised invisible taxation operates with peculiar efficacy, in the language of its advocate, —and, in more appropriate language,—with peculiar severity, upon the necessaries and comforts of the slave population. I am not sufficiently well informed to enable me to estimate the proportion of the expense of the maintenance of a man for one year, which goes to purchase his clothing. It is, however, quite evident, that a reduction of one-half in the price of coarse woollen cloths would very materially better the condition of the laboring blacks. While the impediments to the easy obtaining of subsistence, caused by the ignorance and folly of man, will, it is hoped, be removed, at the same time, the resources of nature—in which I include the faculties of man—will be further developed. Labor will be applied with more skill, and be much more productive. The labor-saving and economical contrivances, which in the last seventy or eighty years have astonished the world—each year being almost equivalent to a preceding century—are not yet exhausted.

These improvements are going on at an increasing rate

of advance. I could not enumerate any considerable proportion of those now discovered, which have not yet been applied to practical benefit. I limit myself to two exemplifications; one relating to what may be saved, the other to what may be done. It is but a recent suggestion, which has not yet, that I am aware, been acted upon, that the soil and water which are now carried off in freshets, laying our lands bare of their manure, may be saved for the purpose of use. The recent improvements in the steam-engine are such, that it is computed there will be a saving of two-thirds of the fuel, and that one thousand acres of land may be ploughed in one day by its aid. The benefit of these and all other improvements must be diffused through society. Every new idea, every attainment, whereby labor may be facilitated and wealth increased, goes to facilitate the emancipation of the blacks.

Where human life is coarsely supported, it is said that one-half the expense required to support it consists in the procuring of food. Indian corn and rice are, I believe, the principal articles of food of the slaves in the southern states. The customary allowance to those who are fed upon indian corn is, or at least was, a peck or eight quarts per week, with a little addition of salt. This allowance, somewhat increased by their labor on Sundays, and in other inconsiderable intervals of their stated labor, a log hut, a suit of clothes per year, with a few extras, constitute the maintenance of the slave. Who shall say that he would not be able to make this and a much more ample provision for himself? If the slaves now support themselves and their masters, it surely requires not the power of divination to

enable us to predict, that in a very improved state of society, when relieved from the burden of supporting their masters, they would be competent to support themselves.

I have already alluded to the speech of Mr. Clay—the candidate for the next presidency—at the Branch Colonization Society in the state of Kentucky, in December, 1829. That gentleman, in this able speech, evinces much humanity, and a very honorable zeal for the improvement of the free blacks. I much regret that he narrowed his mind to the contemplation of the condition of that portion of the unfortunate African race which needs the least commiseration. The condition of slavery he considers perpetual from the nature and necessity of the case; and the relief which he proposes is to be solely afforded to those who have already been relieved from the greatest calamity of their race. The proposition of the gentleman is characteristic. I will not accuse him of devising means to render perpetual the particular mode of injustice to which he seems to be attached. I do not believe he was influenced by any such design. He has, notwithstanding, acted as if such were his object.

He considers the tariff perpetual. Local improvements at the expense of the people, paid for through the medium of the tariff, seem to be the favorite object of this gentleman—or at least to have superseded for the present his plan of colonization at the public expense, as would appear by his subsequent speech at Cincinnati. How much surplus revenue he anticipated to collect from the people to be applied to internal improvements, before the appropriations should be made for the benefit of the free blacks, does not

appear. It does however appear, by the president's message, that, at the time of its delivery, the amount demanded for this purpose was ninety-six millions of dollars. Since that time, if we may judge from the journal of the proceedings of Congress, new petitioners for similar objects swarm the lobbies of the capitol. Little reliance can therefore be placed upon the surplus proceeds of the tariff, for alleviating the condition of the free or enslaved blacks in the United States.

The proposition of Mr. Clay was, to appropriate a million of dollars per year, from the treasury, for the purpose of transporting free blacks to Liberia. Such a measure would tend to perpetuate one evil, while it could but slightly alleviate another. The proposer should surely have stated his willingness to forego exactions from the public for the Maysville road and other local purposes, before he proposed exactions for a more generous and useful object. The evil—the degradation of the African race—is too great to be remedied by such trivial and inadequate means. The application of one million a year—even if there were any probability of its ever being made—would, with the partial use of the navy, be insufficient to remove to Liberia the annual increase of the black population in this country. The estimated expense of transporting a single passenger, to be left destitute on his arrival, is thirty dollars—and if the condition of the African be improved thereby, the fault lies in our institutions.

The proposition was probably made by Mr. Clay from a conviction that the action of the Colonization Society upon the mass of the black population in this country had been

feeble—and that an association, formed in 1816, which at this time had created a colony with only two thousand inhabitants, could hardly be relied upon, without the aid of government, to make an impression upon the African population in the United States.

Slaves are now raised under this barbarous system like cattle for the market. While human flesh is a marketable commodity, it will, like other commodities, be produced in proportion to the demand. Those who are now transported to Liberia are not slaves, but they supply the place in the community which in their absence would be filled by slaves. The stimulus or encouragement given to the business of raising slaves for sale, is very much the same, whether the export be of the enslaved or free blacks. The black population in the United States will rather be increased than diminished by a partial emigration. The principle of population will operate among us as in Ireland, and as, I believe, it has in every country where the emigration has been of the surplus population. The Irish have scattered themselves over the civilized world, while their numbers have been very rapidly increasing at home. The same principle has been manifested in the eastern states in this country. The immense emigration to the west has not lessened our numbers—they have constantly increased.

The partial object advocated by Mr. Clay, and many others, is beneficent and useful. It is, however, a palliative which recognises the legality of slavery, and tends to perpetuate its existence.

If it were necessary—as I believe it is not necessary—to transport these unfortunate people to the land of their an-

cestors—a merely nominal home—it should be done at any sacrifice. As the national compact now is, it cannot be done at the expense of the country without altering or violating the constitution. If such alteration should be proposed, it should embrace the object of doing entire justice to this injured race, and of removing the principal stigma from our national character.

In the progress of society, political and personal liberty have been attained by many people and nations as much, or nearly as much, degraded and oppressed as the Africans now are in this country. What has been done, may be done again.

As the subject is one of great interest, I request permission to recapitulate and restate the argument.

The objections to the emancipation of the slaves in this country, so far as I know them, are these :

1. The violation of the rights of property.
2. The inability to cultivate the lands, upon which slaves are now employed, with free labor.
3. The inability of those who are now slaves to support themselves as freemen.
4. The danger of commotions.

Let us consider these objections in their order.

First : The violation of the rights of property. The imputation of advocating jacobin principles is cast upon those who advocate the practical application of the doctrine of the equality of men, and the right of each individual of our race to personal liberty. Epithets do not vary principles. If a question be raised so important as that of the legal

right of one man to hold another man in bondage, it must be decided—and it should be decided upon the principles of justice. As the argument has been protracted, I will refer on this point to the opinion of the late Judge Sedgwick, in the case of Greenwood and Curtis, in the sixth volume of Massachusetts Reports, delivered in the year 1810.

It seemed to him that the law of nature should be the law of the land; that one man could not have a legitimate property in the person of another man; and that therefore a contract made at Rio Pangos, on the coast of Africa, for a cargo of slaves, was, as the law terms it, *malum in se*, and void as against the law of God. He held accordingly that no action upon such a contract could be sustained at common law in Massachusetts. His opinion was in conformity with that of Lord Mansfield in the leading case of Somerset.

This opinion was founded in the natural rights of man; which are now recognised by most of the civilized nations, and must soon be recognised by all. The tenure of slavery, and the legality of the slave-trade, rest upon the same principle. The illegality of the slave trade is almost universally admitted. This is proved at least in part by the efforts made by the governments of Europe and that of the United States to abolish it. By parity of reason—if the traffic be illegal—and illegal because it deals in human flesh, no right can be acquired by it, and of course none can be transferred.

In what I have read upon the subject, the question is rather evaded than argued. The custom of nations, sometimes called the Law of Nations, is cited as authority for the continuance of a practice which, upon principle, cannot be sustained. Injustice cannot be supported upon prece-

dent. Authority does not make right; nor is the violation of the right of any individual of our race to enjoy personal liberty, to be sanctioned, because the practice originated with our ancestors.

Slavery is said to be a state which always existed. Of this there can be no evidence. Suppose it were so. Primitive times—so far as we know any thing of them—appear to have been times of fraud, violence, and murder. Power was the test of right.

“ The good old rule,
 “ The simple plan,”—
 “ That he should take who has the power,”
 “ And he should keep who can,”

is not recognised in modern ethics. It was, however, supported by the same authority, and the same reasons, which are now urged to support property in slaves. The maxim, that the “ receiver is as bad as the thief,” is of at least equal antiquity; and though not morally, is legally applicable to the slave-holder.

I do not intend to impeach the morality of those who continue to hold property in slaves. From the nature of man, the sense of right is blunted by custom. Many—perhaps most of those who hold slaves—hold them in conformity to the dictates of their consciences. If they mistake herein, they fall into a common error, and are not to be charged with an intentional violation of right.

Second: The inability to cultivate the land upon which the slaves are employed, otherwise than by slave-labor.

This objection, if it exist, must principally apply to the cultivation of rice, cotton, and the sugarcane. If the cultivation of these products in this country be so excessively laborious, or so unhealthy, that it ought not to be carried on by freemen—then it should be abandoned. So far from its being true, that slavery is essential to cultivation of any sort, it must, from the constitution of our natures, be true, that if slavery produce any effect upon the animal spirits, it must depress them; and if it affect the animal strength, it must enfeeble it. A negro can surely endure heat, or labor in water, as well after as before having obtained his liberty. The only question is, whether he will be willing to do so. The experience of the world has never shown that when there was a sufficient demand for labor, and a sufficient number of laborers, there was any difficulty in procuring ordinary labor to be done. Occupations more laborious, and more destructive to life than the labor of field negroes, are eagerly sought, and cheerfully undertaken. Wherever any cultivation is practicable, there is no danger that it will not be undertaken from the indisposition of poor people to work for hire.

The personal attachment of slaves to their masters, in cases where it exists, would not be destroyed by emancipation: on the contrary, if the emancipation were voluntary, it would be much increased by the sense of gratitude. The local attachments, which all feel more or less, would bind the emancipated slave to the place of his former residence, unless strong inducements were offered him to remove. From mutual convenience, the emancipated slaves would remain in the employment of their masters. Their connec-

tions with each other, and the almost innumerable reasons which induce a continuance in a fixed abode, would prevent removals in all cases where special inducements were not offered. The slave is not, perhaps, quite so much domesticated as his master, but nearly so. It would be natural to continue occupations to which he had become accustomed. It would be painful, as well as inconvenient, to quit the hut that had long afforded him shelter, and the little patch of ground which he had long cultivated. Unless some general provision were made by the United States, there is not much greater reason to anticipate a general emigration of the blacks in case of emancipation, than there is that any other portion of the population of the country will emigrate *en masse*. The natural course of things would be, for the proprietors of estates or their agents, to make contracts with the negroes who were already tenants upon their estates. The interests of both parties would suggest this obvious course, and there is no apparent reason why it should not be adopted, except in the few cases where the minds of the slaves had been exasperated by cruelty.

Wages would be substituted for maintenance, and this would probably be for the benefit of both parties. The laborers would work more cheerfully, and do more work in the same time, and the produce would be greater. Unless there should be convulsions which derange the order of society and interrupt occupations, there seems no reason to believe, that the owners of plantations, in the supposed case of a general emancipation of the negroes, could not hire the laborers who had been their slaves, or other freed men, as their substitutes.

Third: The inability of those who have been slaves to support themselves.

If, as I have supposed, they should be generally continued in the employment of their former masters, they would of course be supported. It is not to be supposed that the cultivation of lands now worked by slaves would be discontinued. There must, therefore, be a demand for the same species of labor by which the lands had been before wrought. This demand would be readily supplied by the labor at hand. Some of the slaves are mechanics, and capable of becoming good mechanics. These, and others who hoped to better their condition, might be disposed to emigrate, and thus somewhat diminish the supply of labor. It is not impossible that the emancipation of the slaves might result in a manner quite different from what is anticipated—that, under the stimulus of freedom, they would become good laborers—that their services would be sought by their former masters; and, in case of a considerable emigration, that there would be rather a deficiency of black laborers than an over supply.

The question rather relates to field laborers than to house servants or domestics. These last are hardly to be dispensed with. Most of them are women, and as society is now arranged, the wages of women amount to little more than a bare support. It would indeed be strange if, in this favored country of cheap and fertile lands, a laborer could not earn his subsistence. Even in England, Burke considered that the man who had a vigorous constitution, possessed a fortune.

As I have before stated, the original reason of the introduction of the Africans into this continent, was, their supe-

riority to the natives, in bodily strength. It is well known that the aborigines of our country are generally inferior to the Europeans in bodily strength, and more especially in the power of enduring continued labor. Great efforts are made and great privations endured by the indians; but a white man is usually an overmatch for an indian in a personal contest of mere strength.

There is no such constitutional disparity between the whites and the blacks. The negroes are at least as much inclined to voluntary labor as the indians; and, as I believe, are rather more able to endure it. The Cherokees and some of the other tribes of indians, who have adopted the habits of civilized life, profess their perfect ability to support themselves.

It would be difficult to prove, that in the origin of any of the now flourishing nations of the earth, civilization, the arts, wealth, and whatever indicates improvement, ever made more rapid progress than they have made among the Cherokees. The development of our country was not from the germ. Englishmen, as well educated as any Englishmen, with all the knowledge of the times, both speculative and practical, with an adequate amount of capital, emigrated in large numbers to this country. It was as much a transfer as a new establishment. It was not to have been expected that Hayti, under circumstances so dissimilar, should have made a progress which bears so favorable a comparison with the progress made by Virginia and Massachusetts, as appearances seem to indicate.

It is not to be anticipated that uneducated slaves, disenthralled from slavery, can immediately become like those

who have enjoyed every advantage of education that the times would afford ; but it is to be hoped and expected, that the domesticated negro would as easily and beneficially be brought into cultivated life, and attain its customary results, as the wild and wandering indian. The policy of our government supposes that the indians are capable of relinquishing the hunter's state, and of subsisting by agriculture and the arts. The negroes are at least equally capable of living by agriculture and the arts. The change would be much less in the case of the negroes than in the case of the indians.

Fourth : The last, and perhaps the principal objection to the emancipation of the slaves, is the apprehended danger of commotion.

If the blacks shall be driven to insurrection to obtain their liberty, there will of course be commotion. In such case, tumult, strife and bloodshed seem to be the course of nature, and the order of Providence. All history furnishes illustration. Some of us have lived in the times of the American revolution, the French revolution, and the revolution at St. Domingo.

If the liberty of the blacks be accorded to them, there seems to be no more danger of commotion or strife than would exist between the Georgians and the Cherokees, if each would respect the rights of the other. It is injustice, outrage, cruelty, that excite the passions, and impel men to retaliation ;—not concession.

Great alterations in the structure of society are usually, perhaps necessarily, accompanied by considerable derange-

ment, and much individual embarrassment and inconvenience. These are temporary; the change is permanent and beneficial. In performing so signal an act of justice, as the emancipation of the slaves of the United States, sacrifices are to be expected; yet I trust they would be less, and attended with more compensation than those concerned would probably anticipate. The consciousness of having done justice; of having converted misery, or at least comparative misery, to happiness, would, to generous minds, be no slight compensation. The lands would be better cultivated. Population would increase, and land consequently rise in value. Such is the principle of diffusion in society, that the increase of wealth and comforts, in innumerable unforeseen modes, benefits the entire mass of society.

Nothing but absolute necessity should prevent the award of justice. Those who interpose the plea of necessity to debar men from the exercise of rights inherent in their nature, should be held to strict proof.

Our country fought for justice, and should be ready to award the justice which it demanded.

The present enlightened ministry of Great Britain—if an opinion can be formed from the intimation of one of its most illustrious members, and recent proceedings in parliament—contemplates the abolition of slavery in the West Indies. What in this way can be effected in a more southern latitude, can certainly be effected in the United States. In our respect for the rights of man—in this strife of magnanimity—let us not be surpassed by the country from which we have separated.

POSTSCRIPT.

SOME remarks have been made in regard to the propriety of mingling the question of commercial restrictions with the main subject of the discourse—the abolition of slavery.

The writer did this after reflection. Perhaps, however, there should be some more explanation of the reasons which induced him to connect the question of the abolition of slavery with that of the anti-commercial system.

The vices, as the virtues, have between themselves a common bond of union. This, as applied to these two paramount vices, is not a mere philosophical proposition, but a plain, apparent, and most important truth. The market for slaves, and their price, in the southern states, are in a great degree made by and depend upon the cultivation of sugar in Louisiana. This cultivation is forced by the tariff, and is, for the most part, the creation of the tariff. The effect of the tariff to increase the value of the capital held in slaves in the United States, is relied upon by some of its principal advocates in Louisiana, as one of the main reasons why it should be sustained. The tariff is upheld as increasing the value and price of slaves, and of course, as upholding slavery.

Besides removing the factitious support of slavery, the demand for and high price of slaves, the abolition of the tariff would otherwise tend to the abolition of slavery.

Upon the ordinary principles of human nature, the slave owners of the south, enriched, or put in the way to become enriched, by the removal of the burthens to which they impute their poverty, would be more disposed to accord justice to others, when justice had been accorded to them. Opulence leads to acts of justice and liberality—poverty tends to grinding and oppression.

Many emancipations may be expected from a change of feeling caused by a change of circumstances. This, however, could not be relied upon as a ground of hope for the emancipation of slaves, with the same confidence as another cause more powerful, and more sure of operation. The abrogation of the tariff, by its necessary effect to give greater value to the labor of a man, would enable the slave to purchase his own liberty.

I shall attempt to present the case in such a mode, as at least to refute the constantly recurring fallacy, that the tariff does not operate precisely as a tax, upon those who consume the articles affected by it; and of course, when the tax is not wanted for revenue, but is imposed as a part of the prohibitory system, it is a tax paid to support the misnamed protecting system.

The complaints of the south in this respect are evidently just; and the case is a very aggravated one, inasmuch as the government receives but a small portion of what is paid by the people in prices enhanced by the tariff. But I must not digress from the main subject, and therefore leave this

inequitable and injurious characteristic of the tariff—to wit, that it exacts from the people much more than the government receives—to be exposed in its proper place.

Suppose then a slave to make a contract with his master to apply his surplus earnings to the payment of the price of his liberty, so as to pay an annual sum until the stipulated amount had been paid. This is a mode in which a slave is often permitted to buy his freedom. How much could this process be facilitated by the doing away of the tariff?

Among his brethren at Hayti, Liberia, or elsewhere in the tropical or equatorial regions, he could soon pay for himself by sending his products to his master, if the unjust american system did not interfere to prevent him from attempting to obtain his freedom in that mode.

If the slave who has made the supposed contract remain in this country, the operation of the tariff against him, although not quite so evident, would be nearly as oppressive as if he went abroad to earn his freedom, in the mode which I have supposed. The operation of the tariff to increase the cost of his maintenance, and to diminish the amount of the products of his labor, would perhaps be equivalent to the duty on his produce if sent from abroad into this country.

A postscript does not afford space for amplification, and I must be content with merely presenting this imperfect view of the effect and operation of the tariff to prevent the abolition of slavery.

In a short time, the reduction of the cost of production which is rapidly going on—and which purblind politicians impute to the tariff—the present duty on sugar will be one hundred per cent. ad valorem. This is one of the principal

staples, the cultivation of which—but for this unnatural barrier—would aid these unfortunate slaves to purchase their liberty.

The mere saving of duty, immense as it would be, would not be the only aid which the abolition of the tariff would afford to slaves to gain their liberty. Suppose them to be in a settlement where they would be free from duties on imports, or in other words, where there was no tariff—the skill and effect with which their labor would be applied would be greater than it is, or can be in this country, while this check—the tariff—shall continue to operate: and, in addition to this, all tools, implements, and machinery, that come in aid of industry of every description, would be cheaper and better, and enable them to do more work with the same amount of labor. If they remain in this country, the abolition of the tariff would operate as exemption from the burthens of a tariff in a new settlement. The efficiency of labor must be greater when the obtaining mechanical aids to labor is more easy and cheap. The communication of improvements would be sooner made, and the improvements sooner adopted, when intercourse was not fettered by a tariff. In the present state of the art of cultivation, a black colony might be commenced under auspices as favorable as many white colonies that have succeeded.

The advantage of sending coffee, indigo, sugar, fruits, spices, and other productions of the colony, duty free into this country—although it would be a mere riddance of an absurd and unnecessary incumbrance—would, perhaps, counterbalance the disadvantage of the debt *assumed* by the negroes to their masters as the price of their liberty. If

in such cases security for payments were required before permission to leave the country were granted, philanthropists—or perhaps others, acting solely from motives of self-interest—might be found to give the required security, and it would probably be given with safety.

If it were not for the settled, but absurd notions, connected with artificial institutions, it would be as apparent to all, that the abolition of the tariff would aid in the abolition of slavery, as that the casting off fetters gives liberty to him who has worn them; and that a man can do more labor, earn more, and pay more, when he is unfettered, than when his hands and feet are bound.

Slavery, and unnecessary restriction upon commercial exchanges, are both, but not equally, in violation of natural right. It would be a beautiful spectacle, interesting alike to the philanthropist and the economist, to observe how emancipation from the minor restriction—that imposed on commerce—would aid in the emancipation of the slaves from bodily thralldom. Hope and success stimulate effort. Without a tariff, every cultivated acre would yield more produce, and the same produce would give more money, and pay a greater amount of debt. With a tariff, the net proceeds of a consignment would, probably, leave nothing that the negro could spare as part payment for his liberty. What should go to discharge his debt, would be taken by the government, and if the government be in the hands of the tariff party, the exaction would virtually be made by that party. The strength of this party lies in the north, where a preference of profit over liberty and justice—which the support of the tariff implies—would not be willingly avowed.

This discussion pertains to political economy. The principles which are here baldly stated, may not produce the conviction that would be produced in fair minds by farther argument and elucidation, which the limits of this pamphlet deny.

The argument may be summed up thus : The supposition of colonizing slaves abroad, fairly tests the effect of a tariff to diminish the amount which it is possible to accumulate from the savings of labor. The slaves, supposing them to be colonized abroad so as to be free from a tariff—which necessarily increases the expense of living, and also the cost of producing every article for sale—and supposing the whole of a remittance to be paid to their masters for freedom, instead of taking the half of it, as in the case of the sugar tax, for the benefit of the protecting system, would, undeniably, be in a much better condition as to the means and possibility of purchasing their freedom, in consequence of the abolition of this artificial system.

Those who restrict natural right, know little of the extent of the evil which they inflict. The politicians who countenance or sustain the present system, did not and do not, intend to become responsible for slavery or want ; and yet perhaps it will appear, that—unless ignorance be a defence—they are responsible for both slavery and want. The tariff tends to keep in bondage two millions of human beings, capable of being as good and useful citizens as those who now, unconsciously, co-operate to perpetuate, or at least, to prolong their thralldom.

